

## New Report: Economics of Trophy Hunting in Africa Are Overrated and Overstated



Tuesday, June 18, 2013  
Washington, DC

A new report released today analyzes literature on the economics of trophy hunting and reveals that African countries and rural communities derive very little benefit from trophy hunting revenue. The study, authored by Economists at Large—commissioned by the International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW [www.ifaw.org](http://www.ifaw.org)), The Humane Society of the United States,

Humane Society International and Born Free USA/Born Free Foundation—comes amid consideration to grant the African lion protection under the U.S. Endangered Species Act (ESA).

“The suggestion that trophy hunting plays a significant role in African economic development is misguided,” said economist Rod Campbell, lead author of the study. “Revenues constitute only a fraction of a percent of GDP and almost none of that ever reaches rural communities.”

As a portion of any national economy, trophy hunting revenue never accounts for more than 0.27 percent of the GDP. Additionally, trophy hunting revenues account for only 1.8 percent of overall tourism in nine investigated countries that allow trophy hunting, and even pro-hunting sources find that only 3 percent of the money actually reaches the rural communities where hunting occurs. While trophy hunting supporters routinely claim that hunting generates \$200 million annually in remote areas of Africa, the industry is actually economically insignificant and makes a minimal contribution to national income.

“Local African communities are key stakeholders for conservation, and they need real incentives for conservation,” said Jeff Flocken, North American regional director, International Fund for Animal Welfare. “Non-consumptive nature tourism—like wildlife viewing and photo safaris—is a much greater contributor than trophy hunting to both conservation and the economy in Africa. If trophy hunting and other threats continue depleting Africa’s wildlife, then Africa’s wildlife tourism will disappear. That is the real economic threat to the countries of Africa.”

Many species suffer at the hands of trophy hunters including the African lion. The number of African lions has declined by more than 50 percent in the past three decades, with as 32,000 or fewer believed remaining today. The steepest declines in lion population numbers occur in African countries with the highest hunting intensity, illustrating the unsustainability of the practice.

“Trophy hunting is driving the African lion closer to extinction,” said Teresa Telecky, director, wildlife department, Humane Society International. “More than 560 wild lions are killed every year in Africa by international trophy hunters. An overwhelming 62 percent of trophies from these kills are imported into the United States. We must do all we can to put an end to this threat to the king of beasts.”

Listing the African lion as endangered under the ESA would generally prohibit the import of and commercial trade in lion parts, and thus would likely considerably reduce

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the number of lions taken by Americans each year.

“The U.S. government has a serious responsibility to act promptly and try to prevent American hunters from killing wild lions, especially when the latest evidence shows that hunting is not economically beneficial. Listing the African lion under the Endangered Species Act will help lions at almost no cost to African communities. Government inaction could doom an already imperilled species to extinction through much of its range,” said Adam Roberts, executive vice president, Born Free USA.

**A copy of the economic study is available for download.**

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About the International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW)

Founded in 1969, IFAW (the International Fund for Animal Welfare) saves animals in crisis around the world. With projects in more than 40 countries, IFAW rescues individual animals, works to prevent cruelty to animals, and advocates for the protection of wildlife and habitats. For more information, visit [www.ifaw.org](http://www.ifaw.org). Follow us on Facebook and Twitter. Photos and video available at [www.ifawimages.com](http://www.ifawimages.com).

About Born Free USA

Born Free USA is a recognized leader in animal welfare and wildlife conservation. Through litigation, legislation, and education, Born Free USA leads campaigns against animals in entertainment, exotic “pets,” trapping and fur, and the international wildlife trade. Born Free USA brings to America the mission of the U.K.-based Born Free Foundation, established in 1984 by Bill Travers and Virginia McKenna, stars of the iconic film *Born Free*: to end suffering of wild animals in captivity, conserve threatened and endangered species, and encourage compassionate conservation. ([bornfreeusa.org](http://bornfreeusa.org); [twitter.com/bornfreeusa](https://twitter.com/bornfreeusa); [facebook.com/bornfreeusa](https://facebook.com/bornfreeusa).)

About Born Free Foundation

Born Free Foundation, based in England, is an international organization devoted to compassionate conservation and animal welfare. Born Free Foundation takes action worldwide to protect threatened species, stop individual animal suffering, and keep wildlife in the wild. Born Free helps hundreds of thousands of animals worldwide each year. ([bornfree.org/uk](http://bornfree.org/uk))

About The Humane Society of the United States

The Humane Society of the United States is the nation’s largest animal protection organization, rated the most effective by its peers. Since 1954, The HSUS has been fighting for the protection of all animals through advocacy, education and hands-on programs. We rescue and care for tens of thousands of animals each year, but our primary mission is to prevent cruelty before it occurs. We’re there for all animals, across America and around the world. Celebrating animals and confronting cruelty – on the Web at [humanesociety.org](http://humanesociety.org). Subscribe to Wayne Pacelle’s blog, *A Humane Nation*. Follow The HSUS on Twitter. See our work for animals on your Apple or Android device by searching for our “Humane TV” app.

About Humane Society International

Humane Society International and its partner organizations together constitute one of the world’s largest animal protection organizations. For nearly 20 years, HSI has been working for the protection of all animals through the use of science, advocacy, education and hands-on programs. Celebrating animals and confronting cruelty worldwide — on the Web at [hsi.org](http://hsi.org).



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**Jacques Tremblay** · Works at Ailleurs

It's clear. The only significant effect of trophies hunting is to conduct species to extinction.

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**Francesco Brosolo** · Works at Asgard

That should be clear even to the smallest child. How many people can permit to spend more than 20.000 dollars just to kill an animal? I would wish to know why one, in the first place, should spend so much money like that. There are so many better things then one could do with that money. And one of that is paying for a photographic safari, the only way a safari should be

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**Anne Grice**

Only a cold blooded killer could convince himself that killing is for conservation! And only blind sighted leaders could believe this and permit such nonsensical practice! Revenues from tourism, wild life safaris would be much larger than that from issuing hunting permits! These These countries need sound economic advise on the most effective ways of managing their tourisms. Stop the bloody hunting for short term gains. Organsied tourism brings longer term sustainable gains!! Stop short sightedness and think longer term please!

Like · Reply · 7 · Dec 28, 2014 1:18pm

**Dan Arthur** · Vanderbilt University

I agree completely in regard to Africa, but it's not the same case across the board. Small game hunting (birds), for example, provides the bulk revenue for supporting duck/pheasant sanctuaries in California. However, the birds I shoot, I eat. You don't kill lions for sustenance. You kill lions from ~20 yards away to compensate for erectile dysfunction.

Like · Reply · 4 · Aug 3, 2015 11:26pm

**Carole Beverly**

Dan Arthur Laws like Plttman-Robertson and the Duck Stamp Act are seriously outdated, given that they provide a rationale for hunting in an era when wildlife everywhere is under stress and declining. I believe wildlife conservation should be supported by the general public, including the "non-consumptive wildlife user" (photographer, etc.), who are 10x more numerous.

On the other hand, there is obviously no shortage of paranoia, insecurity, and gun nuttury out there, given store shelves across the country depleted of ammo. Certainly, the gun nuts should pay through the nose. I propose a general tax on guns to pay the cost of gun ownership to society, but not a tax that justifies hunting.

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